(a) whether it is a fact that a news channel has been introduced on Dordarshan recently like other private channels;

(b) if so, whether Government have made any assessment before launching this channel that Dordsarshan would not suffer any financial loss as a result of introducing this channel;

(c) if so, the details of the assessment and the additional amount required by Doordarshan each year as a result of launching this channel; and

(d) the income likely to be generated by this channel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (d) Prasar Bharati has informed that a 24 hours News Channel has been commissioined w.e.f. 3rd November 2003, by replacing DD-II (Metro Channel). Prasar Bharati has informed that for the years 2004-05 and for 2005-06, the revenue generation of the Doordarshan News Channel is targeted at 50% and 100% respectively of the cost of the scheme estimated at Rs. 54.00 crores. Prasar Bharati has further informed that during the current financial year 2003-04, Rs. 20.00 croures has been sanctioined and for the financial year 2004-05, a provision of Rs. 54.00 crores has been proposed.

Roll out of CAS

583. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Consumer Electonics and TV Manufacturers Assoication has urged Government to ensure a quick roll out of Conditional Access System as it would enable the viewers to pay less for their monthly cable bill;

(b) if so, whether almost all the States have opposed this move;

(c) whether any modification in the Cable TV Act is being considered;

(d) whether Government are considering to set up a Broadcasting Regulatory Authority as the Group of Ministers on Telecommunications has decided to put on hold the Convergence Bill; and

(e) by when a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. No precise time frame can be indicated at this juncture.

Launching of broad range of media products

584. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that the Walt Disney Company proposes to set up office in India to launch a broad range of media and entertainment products;

(b) Whether this project has been cleared by Government; and

(c) Whether the company would launch Disney Channel for Children in the country, as a pay channel or otherwise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) One of the conditions of the approval given by the Government is that the company would not undertake any Broadcasting from Indian soil unless specifically permitted to do so. The company has not applied so far to uplink from the Indian soil.

New DD news channel

585. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have launched a new DD news channel;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent of private software productions to be beamed on this channel and the details thereof like the number of sponsored programmes, names of the production companies, duration of their programmes, the names of the major programmes of those private production units and the salient features of the agreement that have been worked out?